

Office of the Child Advocate Report to Oversight Commission on Children's Services

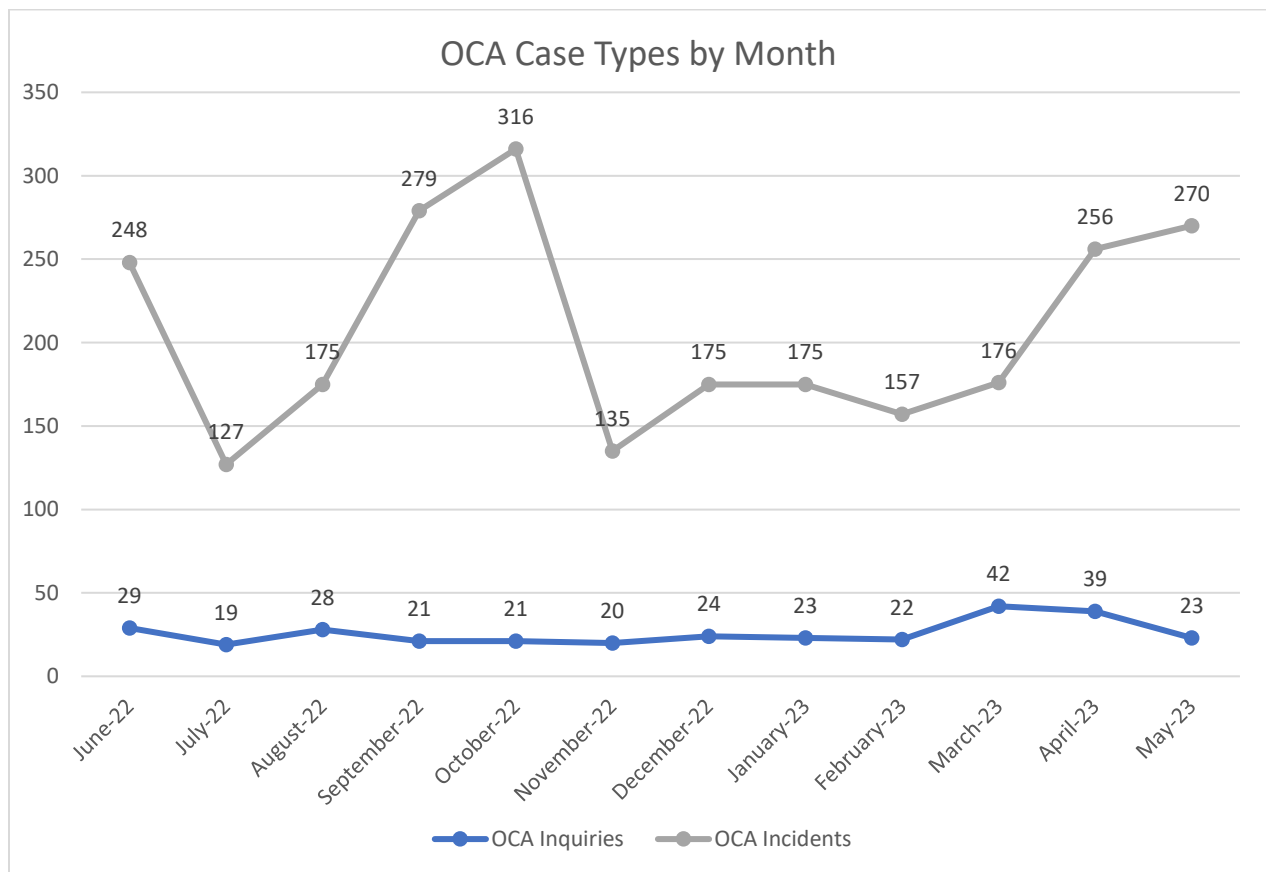
Child Advocate, Cassandra Sanchez

June 16, 2023

Total OCA Cases (Inquiries & Incidents)

Rolling 12 Month: 6/01/22 - 5/31/23

Month	OCA Inquiries	OCA Incidents
June-22	29	248
July-22	19	127
August-22	28	175
September-22	21	279
October-22	21	316
November-22	20	135
December-22	24	175
January-23	23	175
February-23	22	157
March-23	42	176
April-23	39	256
May-23	23	270
Total Inquiries:	311	2489
Total Cases:	2800	



OCA Case Explanation

- Inquiries to the OCA include phone calls, emails, and cases opened from in-person meetings with children, providers, and stakeholders.
- Incidents include all critical incident reports from DCYF, and incidents documented by residential programs and SYSC, including restraints and seclusion, missing children.

Facility visits

- 5/3 Vermont Permanency Initiative (VPI) Bennington, VT
- 5/4 Hillcrest Academy Pittsfield, MA
- 5/26 East Acres at Hampstead (PRTF) Hampstead, NH [*pictured at right*]
- 5/30 Easter Seals Manchester, NH

OCA Outreach/ DCYF District Office visits

- 5/16 Conway District Office visit
- 6/6 Manchester Police Department Child Abuse and Sexual Exploitation (CHASE) Team
- 6/15 Meeting with DCYF legal leadership



Conferences/Events Attended

- 5/22-5/26 – Attended *American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children (APSAC) Conference* (Denver, CO)
- 5/24 – Judged, Attended & Hosted a Resource Table at *Magnifying Voices Art Contest* (PSU)
- 5/26 – Attended & Hosted a Resource Table at *CADY Prevention Summit* (PSU) [*pictured at left*]
- 6/8 – Attended DCYF Reunification Event at Krazy Kids in Concord, for Concord, Laconia, and Manchester District Offices

Upcoming Visits & Events

- 7/10-14 Visit to residential programs in Tennessee that have NH children placed at them
- 8/10 DCYF Youth Summit (NHTI)

Current Trends

- Infants with broken bones – 8 across the state within 3 months
- Co-sleeping incidents leading to child fatalities

Topics for Possible Future Legislation

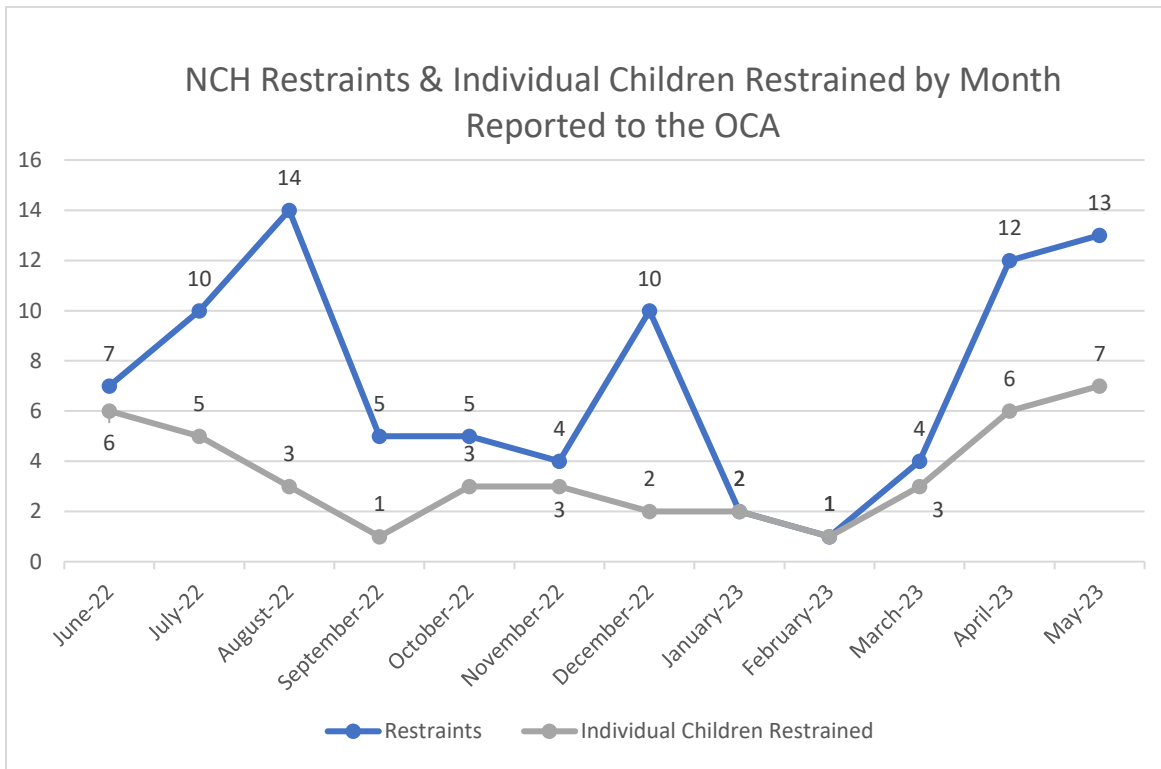
- *Corporal punishment in schools* –20 states have prohibited. Federal bill proposed.
 - This year NH addressed corporal punishment in daycares, schools would be the next step
- *Sharing of documents within a multi-disciplinary team (MDT)*
 - Hearing concerns from medical providers, law enforcement, and DCYF that there are barriers to sharing information in joint investigations
- *OCA access to Central Registry when hiring*
- *Special Investigations Unit (SIU)*
 - Expand to include schools and daycares
 - Pull out of DCYF and run as an independent investigation unit
- *Definition/Interpretation of “abuse” and “neglect”*
 - System mapping scheduled for August
 - Delineate some bright line presumptions or *prima facie* neglect/abuse, ex: manufacturing meth; presence of drugs/paraphernalia; injuries/broken bones (by age?), and apply danger to ALL children in home; suspicious death of a child in the home.
 - Expanding the presumption of risk/harm.
- *Gap in system/services for children with neurodiverse diagnoses*
 - BCBH, DD, JJ (D2), Schools and DCYF often have conflicting views, especially regarding placement
 - Aging out issue – 21-22 when still in school
- *Endangering the Welfare of Children/Def of abuse/neglect*
 - Currently a misdemeanor, make at least some things a felony
 - Unknown/unnamed perpetrators
- *Assigning counsel to all children in RSA 169-C cases*

Nashua Children's Home Restraints Reported to the OCA

Rolling 12 Month: 6/01/22 - 5/31/23

Month	Restraints	Individual Children	Est Population*	% Restrained Est
June-22	7	6	33	18%
July-22	10	5	30	17%
August-22	14	3	30	10%
September-22	5	1	31	3%
October-22	5	3	33	9%
November-22	4	3	32	9%
December-22	10	2	32	6%
January-23	2	2	31	6%
February-23	1	1	32	3%
March-23	4	3	34	9%
April-23	12	6	33	18%
May-23	13	7	33	21%
Total:	87			

*Population data estimated from DCYF Result Oriented Management (ROM) reports. Represents number of DCYF involved children placed at a facility on the last day of the period. Entries and discharges are not captured so this data may undercount total children in the facility during the month.



Nashua Children's Home (NCH)

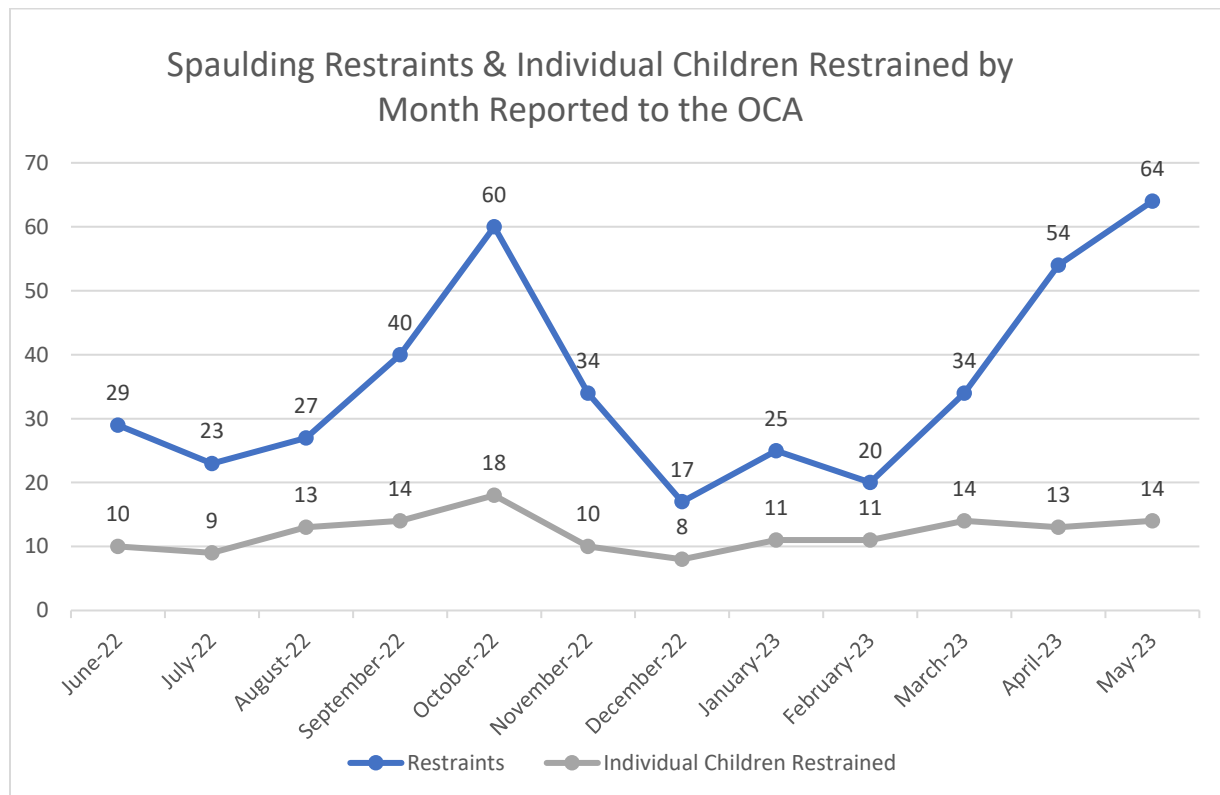
- NCH is a level 2 program which indicates that children placed there should have lower-level acuity and therapeutic needs. The milieu staff ratio is 1:4.
- The OCA has begun to receive quarterly reports for NCH along with some other providers. This report allows us to review their current staffing, number of referrals made, reasons for denials, discharges, restraints, and quiet room data. The last reported month, March, indicates 12 incidents of quiet room use with the longest timeframe being 228mins.

Spaulding Restraints Reported to the OCA

Rolling 12 Month: 6/01/22 - 5/31/23

Month	Restraints	Individual Children	Est. Population*	% Restrained Est.
June-22	29	10	42	24%
July-22	23	9	44	20%
August-22	28	13	43	30%
September-22	38	14	42	33%
October-22	60	18	39	46%
November-22	34	10	39	26%
December-22	17	8	32	25%
January-23	25	11	34	32%
February-23	20	11	35	31%
March-23	34	14	37	38%
April-23	54	13	35	37%
May-23	64	14	36	39%
Total:	427			

*Population data estimated from DCYF Result Oriented Management (ROM) reports. Represents number of DCYF involved children placed at a facility on the last day of the period. Entries and discharges are not captured so this data may undercount total children in the facility during the month.



Spaulding Academy and Family Services (Spaulding)

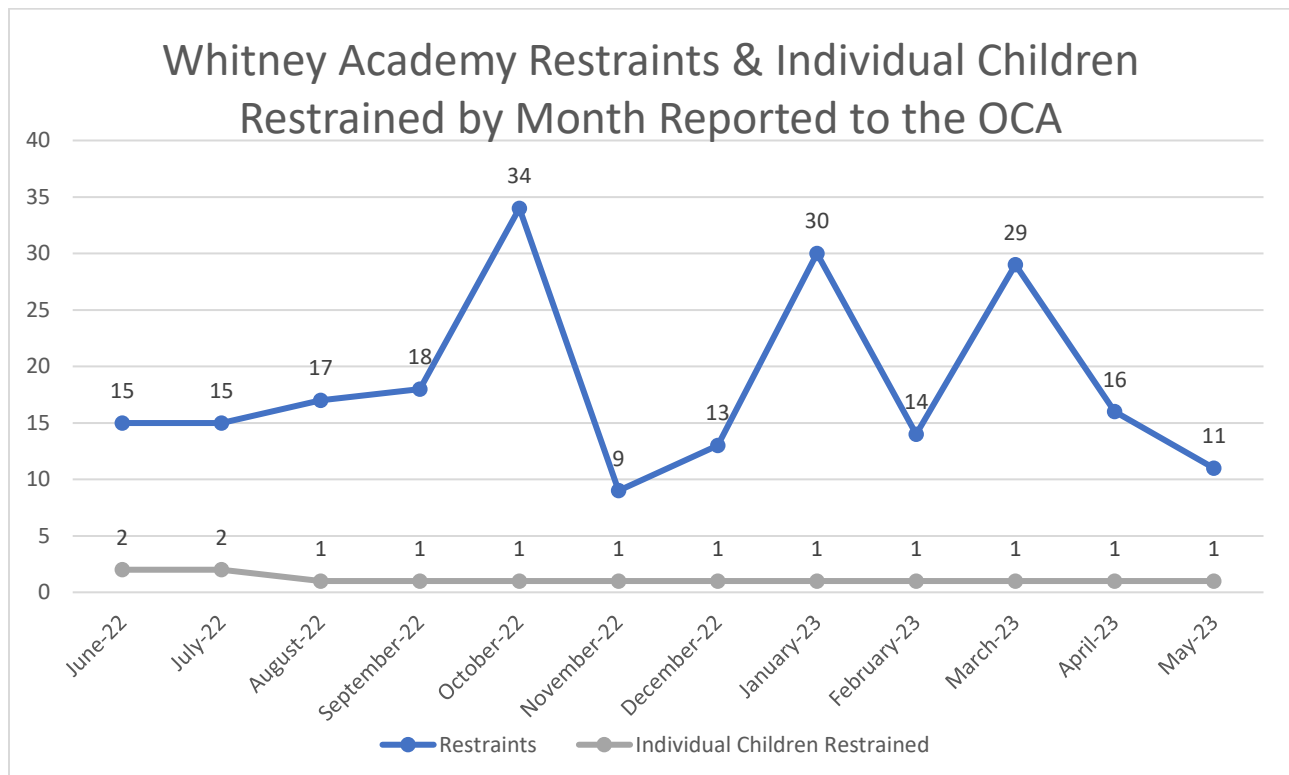
- Spaulding restraints include all programs; Spaulding has one level 2 program and three level 3 programs. At this time the OCA does not have the ability to separate out data for each program given the format in which reports are shared and the limitations of our Case Management System (CMS).
- OCA is currently reviewing restraint reports for 2 children who have had an increase in restraints in May; one child has 18 and the other 11. We are seeking out any trends or triggers that may be identifiable via reporting.

Whitney Academy Restraints Reported to the OCA

Rolling 12 Month: 5/1/22 - 4/30/23

Month	Restraints	Individual Children Restrained	Est. Population*	Est. % Restrained
June-22	15	2	6	33%
July-22	15	2	6	33%
August-22	17	1	6	17%
September-22	18	1	6	17%
October-22	34	1	6	17%
November-22	9	1	6	17%
December-22	13	1	6	17%
January-23	30	1	6	17%
February-23	14	1	6	17%
March-23	29	1	6	17%
April-23	16	1	6	17%
May-23	11	1	6	17%
Total:	221			

*Population data estimated from DCYF Result Oriented Management (ROM) reports. Represents number of DCYF involved children placed at a facility on the last day of the period. Entries and discharges are not captured so this data may undercount total children in the facility during the month.



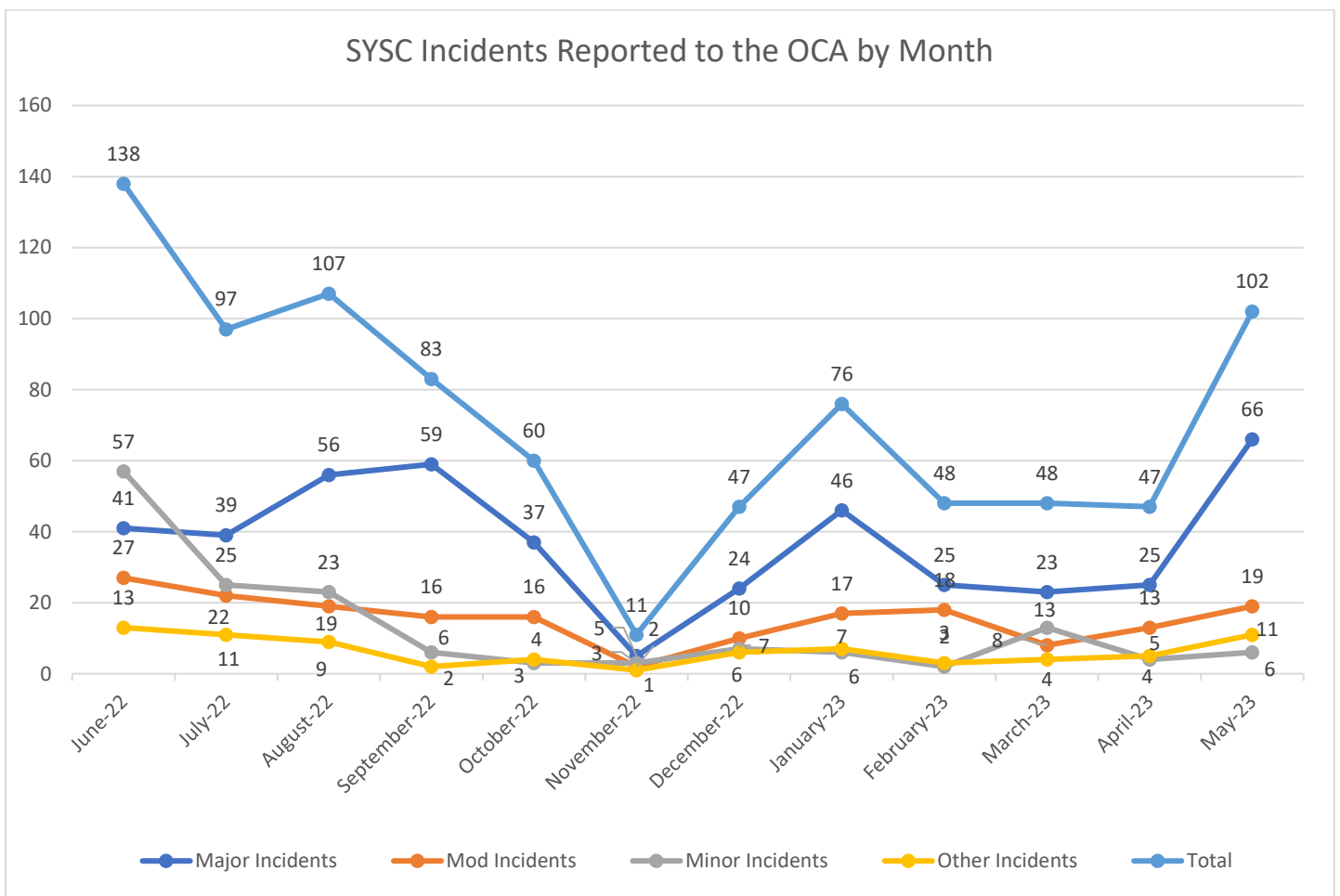
Whitney Academy (Whitney)

- Whitney is a level 3 intensive program which indicates that children placed there have higher therapeutic needs and require additional supports and higher-level supervision. The milieu staff ratio is 1:2.
- Although Whitney Academy is located in Massachusetts, we receive all restraint and seclusion reports for any program that NH DCYF places children in. The above restraint data is specific to NH children.

SYSC Incidents Reported to the OCA

Rolling 12 Month: 6/01/22 - 5/31/23

Month	Major Incidents	Mod Incidents	Minor Incidents	Other Incidents	Total
June-22	41	27	57	13	138
July-22	39	22	25	11	97
August-22	56	19	23	9	107
September-22	59	16	6	2	83
October-22	37	16	3	4	60
November-22	5	2	3	1	11
December-22	24	10	7	6	47
January-23	46	17	6	7	76
February-23	25	18	2	3	48
March-23	23	8	13	4	48
April-23	25	13	4	5	47
May-23	66	19	6	11	102
Totals:	446	187	155	76	864



SYSC Incidents Involving Restraints or Seclusions

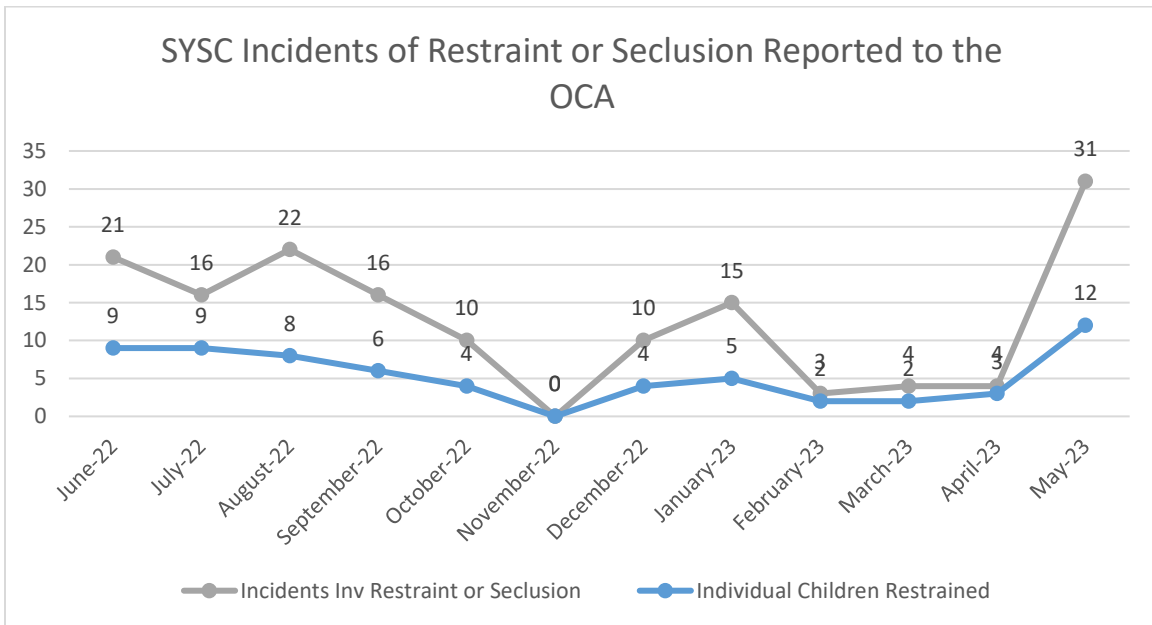
06/01/22 - 5/31/23

Type	# Of Incidents	% of Incidents
Restraints	76	9%
Seclusions	33	4%
Restraint & Seclusion	43	5%
Totals:	152	18%

SYSC Incidents Involving Restraints or Seclusions by Month

06/01/22 - 5/31/23

Month	Total Incidents	Restraint or Seclusion	Individual Children
June-22	138	21	9
July-22	97	16	9
August-22	107	22	8
September-22	83	16	6
October-22	60	10	4
November-22	11	0	0
December-22	47	10	4
January-23	76	15	5
February-23	48	3	2
March-23	48	4	2
April-23	47	4	3
May-23	102	31	12
Totals:	864	152	



Sununu Youth Services Center (SYSC)

- The OCA engages in monthly meetings with the psychologist at SYSC to check in on specific children and discuss clinical offerings. SYSC is currently fully staffed in their clinical department. They have a clinical director, 2 on site clinicians, and a doctoral intern. There has been an increase in clinical groups offered.
- MyTurn is currently offering educational services & UpReach is bringing equine therapy into the facility regularly.
- Current census at the facility as of 6/15/23: 16